14

THE RACE SET BEFORE US,

Shewing the *Neceſsity* laid upon *Goſpel-Believers*, to run *with diligence* thorow all *Goſpel-Duties.*

A SERMON

Preached in *London*, *May* 11. 1665.

AT

MERCERS-CHAPPEL,

Unto that moſt *Eminent Company*,

THE

Company of the *Mercers.*

Incipere multorum eſt, perſeverare perpaucorum. Bernard.

By *Giles Oldiſworth*, Maſter of *Arts*, and *Rector* of *Burton* on the *Hill*, in *Glouceſter-ſhire.*

Oxford, Printed by *A:* & *L: Lichfield*, Printers to the Univerſity. 1666.

BIBLIOTHECA BODLEIANA

X

To the

Right Reverend Father in God,

My ſingular good Lord,

HERBERT,

By Divine Providence,

Lord Biſhop *of* HEREFORD.

My Lord,

THE more careleſs preſent times are, the more vigilant your Lordſhip *is, to make and keep people* zealous of good works: *The ſame was mine endeavour in this* following argument; *which when I preſſed, I ſought, not applauſe, but ſouls: nor do*

I now publish it, to have it praised, but practised.

Mine easie stile and familiar method (I hope) none will condemn; since plainness is the excellency of every race, but much more of this, for this is spiritual.

The more spiritual our race here set before us is, the less it despaireth of your good Lordships implored Patronage: In very truth, there is no small affinitie between our Apostles divine precept, and your Lordships Apostolical pattern; in as much as your Lordship is made unto us a daily example how so to run that we may obtain.

For instance: Goodly are those heritages, great are those revenues, pleasant are those mansions, ancient are those honours which the bountie of God hath derived unto your Lordship; but although all these ennoble your quality, they no whit (1) entangle your goodness: So doth your Lordship over-rule Temporal Blessings, that they do onely administer unto your Lordships spi-

ritual

ritual Dignities and Duties; in them *and* by them *serveing the Church and the glory of* Christ Jesus, *for whose sake your* Lordship *most professedly advanceth as well godliness as excellent gifts, and as well holiness as learning.*

This is one principal cause why, with such obsequious confidence, I am bold to dedicate unto your Lordship *not only this mean Sermon, but it's undeserving Authour; who ceaseth not to pray for encrease of sanctified blessings, both upon your Lordship, and upon your Lordships Familie: for this becometh; this delighteth*

From my Study,
Nov. 7. 1665.

Your good Lordships most obliged Servant, & most devoted Chaplain,

Giles Oldisworth.

Perlegi hanc Concionem cui Titulus (The Race set before us) *in quâ nihil reperio, quominus summâ cum utilitate* imprimatur

ROB. SAY, S.Th.D.
Vice-Can. Oxon.

THE RACE SET BEFORE US,

Shewing,

The *Neceſſity* lay'd upon *Goſpel-Believers*, to run *with diligence* thorow all *Goſpel-Duties*.

1 Cor. 9. 24.

So run that ye may obtain.

Corinth was a city of *Greece*; the *Grecians* were a people *hoſtile* and *War-like*; in fight, πόδας ὠκὺς Ἀχιλλεύς he made the beſt Warriour who was, like *Aſahel*, ſwifteſt of foot; to encourage a ſwiftneſs of foot, at *ſet Places*, at *ſet Times*, were ordained, were inſtituted, ſolemn raceings; *crowns of baies*, or ſome other *prizes*, were publickly produced; for which *run* the *race* who ſo *would*, run ſwifteſt who ſo *could*; he, and he only, who was the *ſpeedieſt runner*, 2 Sam. 2. 18.

wore the *baies* and won the *prize*: Unto these solemnities S. *Paul* here alludeth,

The Text. Saith he, *vers.* 24. I appeal from my *practices* unto your own *customs*, I report myself unto your *Olympick* games, unto your *Isthmian* races οὐκ οἴδατε, ὅτι οἱ ἐν σταδίῳ τρέχοντες, πάντες μὲν τρέχουσιν, εἷς δὲ λαμβάνει τὸ βραβεῖον; οὕτω τρέχετε, ἵνα καταλάβητε. *Doe ye not see, that they who are running a race, doe indeed run all, but one* onely *receiveth the prize? So run that ye may obtain.*

Paraphrased. Beloved, while our *ready writer* thus apparelleth his Argument with similitudes borrowed from *Isthmian* races, Note (I pray you) as well his *language* as his *exhortation*; The sense, the meaning, of his exhortation urgeth, *Know ye not, that many are called but few are chosen? So obey the Gospel that ye may*, with fear and trembling, *work out your salvation.* This (you see) is our Authors sense and meaning; but, while to express this his meaning, this *Master of Eloquence* fetcheth about forms of speech from Persons running in races, his *phrase* importeth more then his *precept*. wherefore

1. *Observation.* From this very phrase, Learn *how to win on mens capacities*: Perceive ye not, that there is no better way to silence gain-sayers, then by assaulting them with *matters from within*

within their own knowledge? Oh convince the diſputer of this World by things ſo evident, that there-unto he him-ſelf muſt be forced to allow his aſſent: Sirs, As people are not eaſily eſtranged from their old acquaintances, ſo they are *ſoon reconciled unto what they know*; Things *already known*, (if once they are mentioned) as they leave a juſt impreſſion upon the memorie, ſo they *ſet an edg upon the underſtanding*; A word thus ſpoken, how good is it? 1 *Cor.* 13. 1. *If I want charitie* I become *as ſounding braſs*; Full well raiſeth the *Holy Ghoſt* unto theſe *Corinthians* a compariſon *from braſs*, ſince no one City was ſo famous for *Braſs* as was this City of *Corinth*; Fitly alſo doth he here in my Text ſpeak unto them of *running*, ſince theſe *Corinthians* excelled in the races at *Iſthmus*. (This is, then, the firſt inſtruction.) "If ye would be able *to convince others*, be able to allude *unto inſtances within their own knowledge.*

Next, in that this form of ſpeech ſo immediately *relateth unto hiſtories* of former times, even unto ſports and cuſtoms anciently uſed amongſt the *Græcians of old*; Obſerve ſecondly, how *ill-advis'd* all ſuch perſons are, who cry down *humane learning* for either *needleſs* or *worſe*: True, 2 *Tim.* 3. 15. God's written word *is able to make us wiſe* unto ſalvation; mean while it ſeemeth good unto 2. Obſervation.

unto the ſame *bleſſed Spirit* which *endited* it, that *humane learning* ſhould make us wiſe in this written word; I ſay, If we would finde the Holy Scriptures able to make us wiſe unto ſalvation; either we muſt *contemn the good gifts of God's good Spirit*, elſe we muſt acknowledge *humane learning* to be that which *maketh us wiſe in* theſe *Scriptures*. But, *contra rationem nemo ſobrius*, as for thoſe *of our times* who appear ſuch *haters of knowledge*, their *folly* is already *manifeſted unto all men*; ſo manifeſted, that (I truſt) *they* them-ſelves *ſhall proceed no farther*: Nor will *I*; Wherefore, in the third place,

S. *Aug*: de *Trin*:

3. Obſervation.

In that our Apoſtle maketh ſo *profitable* a uſe of theſe races whereunto he here refers us, Obſerve thirdly, *To the pure all things are pure*: A holy mind can *ſpiritualize* ſecular tranſactions; The whole creation is, or at leaſt ought to be, every whit as ſerviceable to the *inward*, as unto the *outward*, man; There is a kind of ſ. a *religious chimeſtrie* in a devout ſoul; *Gen.* 24. 63. Send *Iſaac* into the field, and he *will meditate*; Once let the *Greeks* ſolemnize raceings, and S. *Paul* will give them the *ſtarting word* "*So run that ye may obtain.*

But (*diſtillatio favi*) that which, without any the leaſt ſtraining, moſt naturally droppeth from my whole Text, is this *twofold* Doctrine.

1 Doct.

1. Doctrin: *The whole duty of Man reſembleth a race.*

2. Doctrin: *We ſhould* all of us *more earneſtly ſtrive to run thorow our whole duty, then they ſtrive who run a race.*

That *the whole duty of Man reſembleth a race*, I ſhall endeavor to illluſtrate,

I Doctrine proved.

1. From the *Holy Ghoſts uſual way of ſpeaking*; and ſo infinitely wiſe is the *Holy Ghoſt*, that He (at all times) well knoweth how to *ſhape* his Diſcourſe.

2. From *his* own *deſcants upon this his* own *dialect*; and of all *Expoſitors* which, either may, or can, be conſulted, *he is ever the beſt Interpreter* of himſelf.

3. From the *Spirit and Life* of this *metaphorical* Precept, "*So run that ye may obtain*; and when I have repreſented this, you will yet more perfectly underſtand my Text.

That *the whole duty of Man reſembleth a race*, will appear, firſt, from the *Holy Ghoſts uſual way of ſpeaking*; In the *Old* Teſtament, *Draw me* (by thy good Spirit) *we will run after thee* (in thy ways;) When thou haſt enlarged my heart, *I will run the way of thy Commandments*: In the *New* Teſtament, this Pen-man (to name none elſe) can ſcarcely point at our *Goſpel-duties* and eſcape this *metaphor*: He might have ſpoken his minde to the *Philippians*, by ſaying, *I have not la-*

I. Proof; viz: from the *phraſe* it ſelfe. *Cantic.* 1. 4.

Pſal. 119. 32.

Phil. 2. 16.

bored in vain; nevertheless, he prefixeth, *I*
Gal. 2. 2. *have not run in vain*: To the *Galathians* he might have said, Lest I should or had *failed of my purpose*; but he phraseth it, *Lest I*
Gal. 5. 7. *should or had run in vain*: And instead of saying, Ye did *sincerely* obey the Gospel, he telleth them, *Ye did run well*: Neither doth he *vary his language* to the *Romans*, when he a-
Rom. 9. 16. voucheth, *It is not of him that willeth* (not of him that endeavoreth) *nor of him that runneth* (of him that performeth) *but of God who sheweth mercy* both unto him that *willeth*, and unto him that *runneth* too. *Sirs*, Think not these, or other like instances, *wide and too too general*; you will finde them all *pertinent and home* to our purpose, when at length ye consider how (in all these expressions) St. *Paul* ever intimateth *a race* set before us: yea, (as if he there did it once for all,) *Heb.* 12. 1. he most plainly so expresseth himself.

2. Proof: *viz.* From *what the Holy Ghost enlargeth* upon this phrase.

If the phrase suffice not to evidence, that *the whole duty of Man is a race* set before him; yet the *Holy ghosts large descants upon this phrase* will sufficiently prove it. *Heb.* 12. 1.
Heb. 10. 36. where St. *Paul* adviseth, *Let us run the race set before us*, there see how he descanteth upon this advice: Like *a partner in the betts*, he instructeth, *Let us lay aside every weight* (for Sin is burthensom;) and (since *we have need of patience* if ever we will endure to the

the end) he addeth, *Let us run with patience*; If we would obtain the prize for which we run, though we *be* faint, though we *be* weary, *hold on* we muſt; *perſiſt* we muſt, *weary of well running* we muſt not be; therefore he exhorteth, *Let us run with patience*: Again, one running a Race doth *cloath* himſelf *as little*, and *load* himſelf *as light*, as, *ſaving the Articles*, he may; accordingly St. *Paul* counſelleth, *Let us lay aſide every ſin, every weight*; And ſtriving, *if by any means*, he *might attain unto the reſurrection of the dead*: he affirmeth, *This one thing I do, forgetting thoſe things which are behind, and reaching forth unto thoſe before, I preſs toward the mark*. Beloved, ſo palpably would he have us run over *our whole duty*, as over *a Race ſet before us*; that he ſpeaketh juſt, (*juſt for all the world*) like one *in the heat of his courſe*: *Pectora noſtra duas non admittentia curas*; therefore, ſaith he, *Hoc ago*, This *Goſpel-converſation* I ply, *work out* my *ſalvation* I do, and *for this onely* I work; forgetting (*the mile-poſts already by-paſt*) the Graces already attained, and reaching forth unto (*that part of the Race yet before me*) the Vertues not yet perfected; *I preſs forward* (might and main) *toward the mark for the prize*. *Brethren*, ſuch a *continued exerciſe*, ſuch *a life*, is, *beyond all ſcruple*, a Race; *a Race*, in every reſpect.

Gal. 6. 9.

Phil. 3. 13. 14

Ovid.

3. Proof: viz. from the present Text.

This is yet more plain from the *spirit and life* of this precept "*So run that ye may obtain*; the *spirit and life* of which words, is *easie to him that understandeth*; so easie, that it requireth more of *your remembrance* than of *mine interpretation*: all of you will soon conceive their full intent and purpose, if you call to minde,

1. *What race* that is, which *is here set before us*,

2. *What* it is, *to run* this race,

3. *What that is*, *which is*, by running, to be obtained,

4. *What it is*, *so to run* that we may obtain.

1. Ye know the race here set before us, is, not simply *life*, (for, although we *sit still*, the *dayes of our pilgrimage* still run on;) I say, the race here set before us is, not simply *life*, but *liveing*; not living, but *leading a life*; it is *our demeanour during this life*: once for all, it is *our conversation in this world*.

2 Cor. 1. 12.

2. Our *running* of this race, is *the guiding of our feet*, the *ordering of our conversation*.

Heb. 13. 7. 1 Pet. 1. 9. Esa. 35. 10. Phil. 3. 14. Psal. 50. 23.

3. That which by running *may be obtained*, *is*, *The end of our conversation*; The *end of our faith*; it is here v. 25, *a crown incorruptible*, *Everlasting joy upon our heads*; it is, in a word, *The prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus*.

4. Our running, our *so running*, that we may obtain this prize, is, *The ordering of our conversation aright*.

Put

Put all this together, *and from all this put together*, more then manifeſt it is, that *the duty ſet before us, is a race* required of us; which race *ſo run that ye may obtain the prize.*

Now, as the *Goſpel-duties* ſet before us *make up a ſpiritual race*, ſo *we muſt more earneſtly ſtrive to perform every Goſpel-duty then they ſtrive who run to win a prize*: This is *a hard ſaying*; never the leſs, I doubt not to prove the truth of it, from both text, and context. 2 Doctrine proved.

Our ſalvation is 2 *Tim.* 2. 10 in Chriſt Jeſus; but if ever we will *obtain the ſalvation which is in Chriſt Jeſus*, we muſt *more* vehemently *ſtrive to obey the whole Goſpel*, then they ſtrive who run to win a race; This you will ſoon diſcern, if you firſt perceive that *immediate dependance* which this 24th *verſe* hath upon the *preceding verſes*; If ye accompt ſo much upon your *Chriſtian liberty*, (ſaith St. *Paul*) conſider, *Am I not an Apoſtle* v: 1, and therefore One more, much *more*, *priviledged then any private Chriſtian* can be? *Have not we?* v: 4, have not *Barnabas* and I, as lawful *power to eate and drink* things ſacrificed to idols, as have any of you? Hath not *he*? Have not *I*, *v*: 5, as much right *to lead about a Wife* for mine own enjoyment, as have *James* and *John*, yea as *Peter* himſelf hath? We *labour with our hands* for our 1. Proof: *viz.* from the *preceding verſes.* 1 Cor. 9. 24.

livelyhoods *v:* 6; but *have not we a power to forbear working*? Verily, as it is, *v:* 7, *unjuſt* that one ſhould *war* for another *at his own charge*; as it is, *v:* 9, *unreaſonable* to *muzzle the Oxe which treadeth out the Corne*; ſo *v:* 14, the *Lord hath ordained that they* (and therefore I) *which preach the Goſpel ſhould live of the Goſpel*; yet *v:* 15, I have uſed none of theſe liberties: *In ſhort*, my buſineſs is, *not to pleaſe my ſelf in whatſoever I may*, but *to edifie others wherein ſoever I can*; and this I doe *v:* 23, *that I may*, with you, partake, not of deſtructive libertie, but of a *Goſpel-reward.*

A *tacite* Objection.

Queſt: How falleth in this *v:* 24th? *Anſw:* While our Authour hitherto *gave him-ſelf* for *an example*, carnal hearts would quickly object "What is St. *Pauls* example unto us? His *ſelf-denyal* is no *tye* upon other perſons; he, becauſe a *grand Apoſtle*, preferreth *ſeverity of life* before either *freedome*, or *profit*; but they who abide *private Chriſtians*, they who *minde not high things*, they who *affect no* ſuch *popularity*, may even *leave* St. *Paul to His ſtrictneſs*; while they, for their parts, *ſtand faſt in that liberty wherewith Chriſt hath made* them *free.* Thus, thus men of corrupt mindes would be apt to argue; but this *tacite objection* our *v.* 24th preventeth; this *ſort of gain-ſayers* our Apoſtle *undeceiveth*: ſaith he, Never miſtake your ſelves; this

Removed.

this *ſtrictneſs* of mine, is no more then what is neceſſary; *Know ye not, that many profeſs the Goſpel, but few obey it* as they ought? *So run* thorow every Goſpel-duty, *that ye may* at laſt *obtain* the hope which is ſet before you: Ye ſee now, we can none of us be *followers of St. Paul*, as he here giveth himſelf for an example, unleſs we more earneſtly *ſtrive* to perform *our* duties, then they ſtrive who run to win a race. (That, my firſt proof.)

2. Proof: *viz.* From *the preſent verſe*,

But wherefore ſhould we dwell upon the *Context*, ſince the *Text* it ſelf ſo plainly confirmeth this truth? *Know ye not, that they which run in a race, run all, but one onely receiveth the prize? Beloved*, that race was a *vain ſport*, that prize a *corruptible crown*; but the race ſet before us, is *ſpiritual*; and the crown after which we preſs, is *eternal*: Now, if none could receive that *corruptible crown* but he, and he onely, which out-ran all others; neither can we receive the *high prize of our calling in Chriſt Jeſus*, unleſs we ſtrive more earneſtly to obtain it, then they did ſtrive, who ran that race.

Application.

By this time, *theſe ſayings* have ſunk *deep into your ears*: For who can call this Precept unto his remembrance, and not *underſtand for time to come?* or, Who can wiſely underſtand theſe ſaving Truths, and neglect to *work out that ſalvation which is in Chriſt Jeſus?*

sus? Nevertheless, that each of you may, *not onely be, but continue*, wise unto salvation; that all of you may, *not onely run, but so run* that ye may obtain; unto me it will not be grievous, to press forward unto *Application.*

1. Reproof. *Christians*, Ought we to *perform all Gospel-duties* with so great a watchfulness? Must we *so run, as if* we were *running a race?* yea, and *so run this race* too, *as* they who are running *for a prize?* Doth the Holy Ghost *command* us to run, and to run so? Then is this *commandment* a *Reproof unto* those inconsiderate, careless, *stupid, Creatures, who heed not whether there be any such race* set before us, or no: Alas! although *truth* be *the adequate object of the understanding*; yea, although *the more considerable* any truth is, *the more* (in reason) *it should work* upon the understanding; yet, by some *idle-minded* persons, the *weightiest* points are *lightest* set by; *Death, Judgement, Hell, Eternity*, how unquestionable (*these?*) Yet (*the Lord forgive us*) seldom do we *meditate upon these things.* Know we not, that we have every one of us as well *a soul to be saved*, as a body? yet (to their shame I speak it) some among us more frequently *cleanse from filthiness*, the *nails* of our fingers, or the *hair* of our head (I had almost said, the *hair of our Pery-wigs*) then these *precious*, these *immortal* souls of ours!

ours! If with fear and trembling we muſt ſtrive to run, and ſo to run that we may obtain; blame-worthy are all ſuch (*and ſuch are moſt among us*) that *neither care to obtain, nor ſtrive to run.* (That is the firſt.)

Secondly, ſeeing we ſhould all of us run, and run to obtain, This reproveth *preſumptuous Reprobates*, who inſtead of running from the *torments of hell* unto the *pleaſures of heaven*, that is, inſtead of running from a *ſtate of nature*, to a *ſtate of grace*, from a *heart of unbeleif* to a *lively faith*, from a *dung-hill of dead works* unto *fruits of righteouſneſs*, doe run from *bad to worſe*: Such *harden themſelves* in their own *naturall corruptions*! Such *give themſelves over* unto a *perpetual backſliding!* whatſoever *looketh toward* godlineſs and true holineſs, that they *deſpiſe*! wicked miſcreants, (*but deſperately wicked!*) Is it not enough that you *neglect to run* unleſs, inſtead of running forward, ye *lye down in your ſhame*? Can you not be content that ye *deſert the race*, unleſs you *trample under foot the prize* which is ſet before you? Our gracious and mercifull God deſireth, that even you would obtain *an inheritance with the Saints in light*, and doe you take a *vain glory* in *ſelling your ſelves unto the Prince of darkneſs*? O ye fooles, when will ye underſtand? 2. *Reproof.*

Thirdly, Since there is no obtaining ſalvation 3. *Reproof.*

vation in Chriſt Jeſus, unleſs we *ſo run as we ought*; inexcuſable are multitudes, who, although they doe not *deliberately harden themſelvss* in running contrary to God, yet (*if they doe but run at all*) heed not whether they *ſo run* that they may obtain. You (*lukewarm Profeſſors*) will you accompt that a *good fight*, which is only a *beating the aire*? will you eſteem that a *well running*, which is only *a running in vain*? He is more then ſtupid, who *ſlumbereth* in the midſt of *his race!* As good never a whit, as never the better: *Know ye not, that they which run in a race, run all, but one only receiveth the prize*? No *affections*, no *feet*; if ye *cut off the feet* of your affections, be ye ſure, ye ſhall *reap damage*: It is ſaid of *Idolls*, leggs have they and *walk not*; will you be ſuch? Run not, like them whoſe *feet are out of joynt*; but *ſo run that ye may obtain*: And, if obtain you would, receive theſe *inſtructions*,

1 Inſtruction. Firſt, *Let every man diſcharge the duty of his own calling*, 1 Cor. 7. 24. Our converſation can never be *as becometh the Goſpel*, except every man, *wherein he is called, therein abide with God*. Rom. 12. He that *miniſtreth* let him *wait on his miniſtring*; he that *teacheth, on teaching*; and he that *ruleth*, *let him rule with diligence*: (Bear with me) Of late, there is *too great a want of this diligence in rulers*; Profaneneſs threatneth, if not the *cheif*

City

City, yet many *cheif places*, within this Kingdome! It *evil becometh a Chriſtian Magiſtrate*, to *bear the ſword of his God in vain.*

2. *Inſtruction.*

Secondly, If we would obtain that for which we run; let *every one* of us *mind the preſent duty*: *Friends*, As every *promiſe* to us made, *implyeth a duty* requiſite from us, ſo every *place*, every *moment*, requireth from us a *preſent duty* too: *Mat.* 11. 25 *At that time Jeſus anſwered and ſaid, Object.* No body ſpake to him; *Anſw. Ieſus anſwered* the *then* preſent *opportunity*; *viz.* Unto every *inſtant of time* there is an *anſwer due*; I doe not *anſwer my duty* now, except I ſo ſpeak as for *edification*, and that too, as *from the Lord*; neither doe yee *now anſwer* your *duties*, except ye now hear, as perſons deſirous to *inform*, *awaken*, and *ſtrengthen* your ſouls.

[You of this *Eminent Societie*, you the *Honorable Company* of *Mercers*, will anſwer *Your duties*, if you (*this day*) ſhew your ſelves *faithful ſtewards* of thoſe bleſſings in behalf of *pious and charitable uſes*, wherewith the liberal hand of your God hath entruſted you; you will (*this day*) anſwer your duties, if your *Feaſting this day* be among you an occaſion, not unto *diſorder* and *gluttony*, but unto *love unfained* and unto a *rejoycing in the Lord*; I truſt, you will (*this day*) *unite* your *hearts*, not only to delight in *one another*, but *to fear the Lord and his goodneſs.*

(*Right Worſhipful*) You are the *chief and moſt eminent* of the *choſen Companies* of this *moſt famous City*, wherefore, if at all times ye would *anſwer your duties*; as your God hath placed you *the firſt in order*, ſo endeavour ye (I beſeech you) to *lead and go before others* in good examples, & in good works.]

In a word, every one of us then *anſwereth preſent duty*, when he *conſiderately endeavoreth* to perform that at every preſent ſeaſon, wherein he may, *at every preſent ſeaſon, beſt glorifie his God*: We muſt *do good*, and *Gal.* 6. 10. good we muſt do *as we have opportunity*. 1 *Sam.* 10. 7. *Do as occaſion ſhall ſerve*; a good runner *mindeth every ſtep*, he will not loſe, *no not one footing*: Whether *ſand* or *ſands*, whether *hills* or *meadows*, limit their *banks*, toward their *Sea rivers run*; they run and *run continually*; and *John* 4. 14. living Waters are *ever ſpringing upward*: We Chriſtians, throughout our *Spiritual race*, muſt be *like Soldiers*, ever upon duty. (This is my ſecond inſtruction.)

3. *Inſtruction.* Thirdly, If we would ſo run that we may obtain, what duty ſoever we do, *let us do it heartily, as unto the Lord*: Then the *diligent hand maketh rich*, when it *maketh Religion its buſineſs*. Acts 11. 23. *We muſt cleave unto the Lord with a full purpoſe of heart*. *Lev.* 11. 42. Whatſoever *multiplieth feet* is *an abomination*: Why? *Anſw.* It can but *creep*. It is then a ſign that we run well, when we *breath* and *pant*;

pant; *viz.* when we *breath after holineſs*, and when we *pant after God*. Lovers have a *language of their own*; their *feet* talk, their *hands* talk, their *eyes* talk; ſo thou, (when *by-ſtanders*, when *worldlings* are not aware of it) have a *foot* for thy God, a *hand* for thy God, an *eye* for thy God. *Pſal.* 16. 8. They that would *not greatly fall*, do *ſet the Lord always before* them; much more they that would *run well*. Then we *run our beſt*, when *the deſire of our ſoul is toward* the name of our God.

Fourthly, If obtain ye would, *Duly frequent Ordinances*: It is good being there where *Princes ſcatter gifts*: It is good being there where *the power of the Lord is preſent to heal*. Eſa: 64. 5. *Thou meeteſt them who remember thee in thy ways*. *Queſt.* Where are the ways of God? *Anſw. Pſal.* 77. 13. *Thy way, O Lord, is in the Sanctuary*. *Goſpel-bleſſings* accompany *Goſpel-Ordinances*: *Joh:* 5. 4. While the good *Angel moveth the waters* of Life, we ſhould not abſent our ſelves from the *Pools of Bethesda*. *John* 13. 30. When *Judas* forſook the *diſciples of Chriſt*, he left *Chriſt* as well as them; but *John* 20 28. When *Thomas* was aſſembled with the reſt of the Diſciples, he was then no longer *faithleſs*, but *believing*. Unto this hour *Jeſus Chriſt teacheth daily in the Temple*; though not by *himſelf*, yet by his *choſen Miniſters*. That is (then) a fourth Inſtruction, *Let us not* 4. *Inſtruction.*

forsake the assembling of our selves together, as the manner of some is.

5. Instruction. Fifthly, If ye will *so run that ye may obtain*; In the use of all Gospel-Ordinances, *wait for the Spirit accompanying those Ordinances.* Jer: 10. 23 *It is not in Man that walketh* (much less in man that runneth) *to direct his own steps*; but *Esa*: 58. 11, *The Lord* he *shall guide* us *continually*; *Psal.* 143. 3 *Our soul is like a barren and dry land*, it is God that (*Esa*: 58. 11) *maketh* us *like a watered garden. Psal.* 143. 10 *Lead me*, but lead me with *thy good spirit*; now this spirit is given, *Luke* 11. 13 *to them who* thorow very hunger *ask* for it. If in every exercise of godliness, we *thirst* after a *communion with our God*, a communion we shall partake; for our God hath told us, *Esa*: 44. 3 *I will pour water upon him that is thirsty.* Matth. 7. 7 *Seek grace, and finde grace.* Of old time, they who ran races, did first *anoint themselves with oyl*, and we (*in this spiritual race*) should, 1 *John* 2. 27 use *the ointment of the Holy Ghost.* 1 *Sam.* 10. 9 When *Saul* was anointed, God gave *Saul* another Spirit: (*Beloved*) as *Royal Unction*, so *Holy Unction*, not onely *declareth a right*, but *enableth for duty.* Cant: 1. 4 *We will run after thee*, *Qu*: How so? *Answ*: *v.* 3, *Thy name is as oyntment powred forth*: Once get *the Ointment of the Holy One*, you will then *so run that ye may obtain.*

6. Instruction. Lastly, *Do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.*

Among

Among other Excellencies in our *Engliſh Liturgy*, this is not the leaſt, That *almoſt every Prayer concludeth in Jeſus Chriſt his name*: Jeſus Chriſt he is, as well the *Omega* as the *Alpha*; he is the *Amen*: *Beloved*, the *graces* of Gods ſpirit are *living-waters*; but *Zech.* 13. 1 Jeſus Chriſt is that *Fountain* from which theſe *waters* of life are drawn: 1 *Pet.* 1. 11 *The Spirit* which was in the holy Men of God, was the *Spirit of Chriſt*; Col. 3. 3 *Our life is hid in God* but *with Chriſt*. 2 Tim. 2. 1, *Be ſtrong in grace*. *Qu.* In what grace? *Anſw.* In *that grace which is in Chriſt Jeſus*. Micah 5. 5 *That Man ſhall be the peace*. *Qu.* What Man? *Anſw.* 1 Tim. 2. 5 *The Man Chriſt Jeſus*. Ye obtain Salvation, *Qu.* What ſalvation? *Anſw.* 2 Tim. 2. 10 *The ſalvation which is in Chriſt Jeſus*. Epheſ. 6. 10 If ye would be ſtrong to run this race, *be ſtrong in the Lord, and in the power of his might*; lean upon him, *truſt* in him, make him your *ſtay*, your *ſtrength*, and your *good ſpeed*: Yet this ye cannot do, until ye firſt *ſtir up* your ſelves *to lay hold on him*: I exhort therefore,

1. *Exhortation.*

Since we ſhould ſo run that we may obtain, *Let your loins be girt*: Every one of us have, at the beſt, bin ill-adviſed; we have *ſtarted too late*, we have *run too ſlowly*, we have *fallen too often*: Yet, yet the *prize* abideth *before us*; as yet the *Crown is within veiw*; Oh, while we have yet *day-light*, let us *work-out our ſalvation*, let us not fail of ob-

obtaining, let us *lay hold of eternal life*, even of that ſalvation which is in Chriſt Jeſus: Let every one of us *redeem the time*, let us all run, and ſo run, as *knowing the terrors of the Lord*: If we preſs not forward to apprehend, that for which alſo we are apprehended, the *terrors of the Lord* they ſet themſelves *in array* againſt us: For,

1. Terrour. First, It is *a Duty incumbent* upon us, that we run this race: Other races are left unto the ſpectators liberty; *ſpare the prize, and ſpare to run*, This not ſo: This ſo run, is, not a *permiſſion*, but a *command*. We are brought into this world, not to be *by-ſtanders*, not to be *gazers* or *lookers on*, (*that is the the Angels lot, that,*) but to be *runners*: We are *enjoyned*, we are *commanded* to run.

2. Terrour. Next, Were there no command, yet there is a *neceſſity laid upon us*: Of them that doe run, others if they ſo run that they doe not obtain, they have *their labour for their pains*; or, if ſuffer they doe, yet is it at moſt *but ſome ſmall loſs*, ſome *corruptible crown*, ſome *little ſhame*, which will ſoon over: With us not ſo; To *turn back* is death, (*behind us is hell*;) to *ſtand ſtill* is death, (*beneath us is hell*;) *If we will not lay it to heart to give glory to Gods name*, Mal. 2. 3. *God will even bring a curſe upon us*. Heb. 2. 3. It is not *how ſhall we obtain*, but *how ſhall we eſcape*, if we neglect ſo great ſalvation? It is with us, as 1 *Sam.* 14. 13, it was with *Iona-*

than,

than (climbing the rock with his hands) if we *get not up*, we *fall and perish*; if we *reach* not the *height* of *Sion*, we are *cast out* into the *Valley* of *Hinnom*. It is with us as with *pretenders unto supremacy*; if not a *Throne*, a *Scaffold*; if not a *Crown*, a *block*; if we obtain not *the salvation which is in Christ Iesus*, we shall everlastingly abide under *the condemnation of the Devil*.

3. *Terrour.*

Thirdly, Consider the quality of the race here set before us: It is another kind of task to *run thorow all Gospel-duties*, then it was to run over the race at *Isthmos*: 2 *Pet.* 3.11. *What manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness*? So much adoe *to cleanse* from *vain thoughts*, from *evil imaginations*, from *all filthiness of the Spirit*! To watch against *every idle word* which we sure to answer for; to *lay aside every sin*, to put away *the evil of our doings*, to purge our selves *from dead works*, to put off *the old man*! For a mind, *naturally alienated* from God, to *acquaint it self spiritually* with God, to bring *every thought into the captivity* of Jesus Christ, to be *renewed in the spirit* of our mind; to have our *speech seasoned* with Salt, *good for edifying*, & *setting forth the praises* of our God! To bring forth *much fruit*, not to lose *our first love*, to *grow in grace*, to be *perfect* as our *heavenly father is perfect*! *multũ fecitq; tulitq; ---- sudavit & alsit*, who is sufficient for these things? To make what is (*for continuance*),

Horat.

a walk, (*for ſwiftneſs*) a race; to *walk* with God, to *follow* God fully, nay to *run after* him till we *overtake* him, *hic labor, hoc opus eſt!* He that would at all times *deny himſelf*, and at all times *exerciſe* himſelf in *godlineſs*, muſt ſtrive more vehemently, then they ſtrive who run a race.

4. *Terrour.* Fourthly, View *the troubleſome place wherein we run*: Other races are run upon *choſen hills*, upon *champian plains*, upon *carpet-ground*; but this is run *Gal.* 1. 4. in this *preſent evil world*: Whether we regard proſperity or adverſity, *we have little good turfe* here. Every one of us, as well as *Magormiſſabib* Ier. 20. 3, may be named *Fear-round-about*: If adverſity make *the world go heavy* with us, we are then apt to *ſlip and fall*, like *Abraham*, who *Gen.* 20. 2 ſtumbled and *equivocated*; like *David*, who *1 Sam.* 21. 5 ſtumbled and *lyed* down-rightly; like *Iob*, *Iob* (3. 1) ſtumbled and *fell a curſing*. *If* proſperity heap *worldly bleſſings*, though bleſſings they be, they *cumber the new man*; *Hezekiah* ſtuck preſently when 2 *Chro.* 32. 25 the world went well with him; when *Dives fared deliciouſly* every day, *Luke* 16, *Dives* forgot that *there was a hell*; In ſtead of *making friends* by it, many ſtumble at *Mammon* and *Prov.* 30. 9 *deny* God; Moſt, how *uncertain* ſoever riches are, *ſet their hearts* more upon *wealth*, then upon their God *who gave it*. In ſhort, *duſt would to duſt*; and *the more it is*

watered

watered the more dirt it maketh: Now, to *tread well* in ill ground, to *run among thorns* and not *tear the feet*; to run *wayes of holiness* in a *world of wickedness!* In *disadvantagious* ground to *run* at all; yea *so to run* as to obtain, this is more difficult then to run a race.

Fiftly, Cast up how *small* a *pittance of time is here allowed us* for the obtaining of this prize: To one running for a prize, what space of time is allotted? *Answ:* Not a minut to spare; Span the *length of our daies*; 60, 70, 80, years are *soon passed over*; yea none can assure to himself so many *houres of life*, no not so many *minutes*; and yet, if (during life) obtain we can, well; *after death* there is no further running. *Look* we *for*, and *hasten* to the prize, what we are able; if, if we run not the faster, our grave preventeth us. *Sirs*, were *Methusalem* now alive, to work out his salvation were *a project which would cost him every hour of his long life*; As for many of us, we have scarcely found time enough *to set our houses in order*, much less *our hearts*: To *perfect holiness*, is a task for *Paul the aged*; *David*, as he was *full of grace*, so was he *full of daies*; but none among us can *boast* himself *of to morrow*: Up, let us be running, *the day is farr spent*. 5. Terrour.

Sixthly, Examine well *thine insufficiencies*, and thou mayest be a terrour to thy self In 6. Terrour.

other trials, the *racers singled out* are men naturally *agile* and *active*, men *breathed* and *exercised*, men as light *of foot* as a *wild Roe*; but, we, like *Mephibosheth* are *lame of both our feet. Psal.* 19. 5. It is for *a strong man* to run a race; but, we are *weak*, our souls are *aguish*, made up of *infirmities*: (*Impar congressus*!) Our *performances are as nothing*, if compared with our duties. Look on the *things behind*, on that part of our race which we have already run; it will prove, not *hastning towards*, but *a running from* the prize. Alas, our *inability* is manifest, even, in our (*once*) perfection; (*I speak as to wise men*) If *Adam*, when he *could stand, fell*; how shall we, who *are fallen, stand*? Beloved, the more our duties doe over-mach our strength, the greater is the difficulty to obtain this high prize.

7. *Terrour.* Seaventhly, Note *the opposition we meet with*; Others, when they are running a race, are secured from interruptions, 2 *Tim.* 2. 5 If one *strive*, yet *he is not crowned unless he strive lawfully*, viz. *Run with me* (if you will) *get before* me (if you can) but, *justle* me, *shove* me, *bobb* me, ye may not; *that is not fair*; much less to trip up the heels: Otherwise it is with us in our *spiritual race*; we *Psal.* 17. 11 are *compassed in our steps*: Sathan he ever seeketh to foil us; either *bruising our heels*, like an *old Serpent*; else *gapeing to devour us, like*

a

a roaring Lion. So ſpightfull is the Devil unto every Creature of God, that rather then leave his old wont, he will *Mat.* 8. 32. torment *Hoggs*; but, of all creatures, he is moſt *envious* at ſuch as are moſt *like to obtain* this prize: Now *Jerem:* 12. 5 if thou haſt *run with foot-men, and they have wearyed thee, then how canſt thou contend with horſes?* If *without ſtriving* thou canſt not overcome *thine own infirmities;* how canſt thou, without ſtriving vehemently, overcome the power of Satan, that I may not ſay, *Preſs forward* toward the mark? we muſt *fight* (*as well as run*) if ever we will obtain.

8. *Terrour.*

Eighthly, Weigh *the excellency of the prize:* Exceeding pains, *except it be for ſomewhat ſuitable*, is but exceeding folly: On the other ſide, *Great rewards deſerve great induſtry.* Joſh. 14. 9 Saith *Moſes* ~~[illegible]~~, *Surely the land whereon thy feet have troden, ſhall be thine inheritance:* *Qu.* Why an inheritance ſo large? *Anſw. Caleb* followed God *wholly: Chriſtians*, if ever ye would obtain the everlaſting inheritance, *follow God fully:* If others muſt ſo run for a *crown corruptible?* for a few *fadeing bay-leaves?* Know ye not, that the Crown ſet before you, is a *Crown incorruptible?* This prize is, *Phil.* 3. 14 a *prize of a high calling.*

9. *Terrour.*

But, that which is of greateſt moment, is, not our glory, but *the glory of our God:* All

the former instances are not worthy to be named in comparison of this. *Sirs*, were it meerly our own *damnation* that we feared, were it meerly our own *salvation* that lay at *stake*, the worst would then light upon our selves: But 1 *Cor.* 6.19. *We are not our own*; neither run we so much for our selves as for our God. The *start is given*, and *running we are*, but God is he who *betteth the greatest stake*. If thou art Θεοφύλακτος, if thou art *preserved by God*, this glory be given unto the God of thy salvation; but if *Men and Angels* look on, if the *envious devil* look on, and find *in the end*, that (*after all thy running*) obtain thou couldest not; then (think with thy self) *what* will *God do unto* his *great Name?* You, before whom God hath set this *spiritual race*; You, whom the *God of your praise* hath *singled out* to run this race, if you (*his chosen ones*) obtain not, you will then give occasion to *Gods adversary and yours*, to blaspheme the *wisdom* of that God who *appointeth* you to run, and the *power* of that God who *did not enable* you to obtain.

2. *Exhortation.* But ye, *Brethren*, Let *not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid*: Fear hath *bondage*; *watchful* I would have you be, but not *fearful*: Heb. 6. 18 *The race set before us*, is, if rightly understood, *the hope set before us*. Wherefore my next Exhortation is, that, *rejoycing in full assurance*, ye *hope unto the end*.

Stay

Stay not any longer upon *mount Ebal*, but pass over unto *mount Gerizim*: Return back again (*I pray you*); This once return back again by the self-same *way-marks* which I did last erect; and what formerly *meditated* your *terrors*, will ever hereafter become your *strong consolations*.

Permit that we run over them *in order*, and (*that done*) we shall have *finished our course*.

True, It is a *duty incumbent* upon us to run this race; mean-while this duty is, not our *terror*, but our *rejoycing*: Of our selves *what to do*, whether we *should or should not* run, we neither *know*, *nor heed*; but, since our *Maker instructeth* us, since the *Law-giver directeth*, since the *Lord himself commandeth*, happy, happy we! Now know we, that *it concerneth us to run*, and *whither* to run: Now know we, what *is acceptable* to our God, and *good for our selves*; if *Gospel-duties* are the race set before us, the race set before us is the *way of* our *peace*. Since we have a *warrant for what we do*, we will run this race with chearfulness, and with rejoycings; for the *wise* God, the *God of truth*, the *God of our blessings*, He, He, in *free love* to our souls, hath set before us this race. 1. 1. *Consolation.*

The *necessity laid upon us* (that) maketh for our comfort too; *viz. Periissem, nisi periissem. Fœlix necessitas quæ cogit ad deum.* 2. 2. *Consolation.*

Hell

Hebr. 13. 14 If we have here *no abiding city*, we *seek that to come*; If the *Law condemneth* us, it *scooleth* us *to Christ*; In this case, *desperation begetteth courage*: *Necessity* was it which *made* Hannibal *victorious*: The *farther* we run *from death and hell*, the *nearer* we approach *heaven* and glory. Be it (*Job* 21. 6.) be it, that *when I remember I am afraid*, yet, *Sine periculo friget animus*; *Blessed is the man* that thus *feareth always*; Parents provide *rods for their children*, as well as Books. *Psal.* 23. 4 Thy *rod doth comfort* me; for fear of this it is, that we love our own good the better. Of that *Isthmian* race unto which our Apostle here alludeth, One side was bounded with the River *Alpheus*, the other with *naked swords*: Why this? *Answ.* That they which run this race might make *strait pathes to their feet.* Friends, the *Lord of hosts* would never place hell behinde his *chosen* men of War, were he not well able to conduct them into Heaven: If the Captain of *our salvation* break down the Bridge over which we came hither; while he *preventeth* us *from turning back*, he maketh us *more then conquerers*. (And this is our second consolation.)

3. *Consolation.* The *quality and nature of the race* it self, (that) may likewise be our encouragement. The *ungodliness* which we should renounce, What is it? It is (we know) mere *filthiness*, mere

mere *drudgery*; a *good rid of it*. Who (*in the good name of our* God,) who would be *fond of ſhackles*? fond *of being a ſlave*? of being *a ſlave unto the tyrannies of the accurſed devil*? This ſinfulneſs which corrupt nature once delighted in, (Oh!) What a deadly trouble it brought with it? There is *no peace* to him that delighteth in wickedneſs, *ſaith my* God. Secondly, Bleſſed be *the God and Father of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt*; if we may be but *allowed to hate every falſe way*; to *lay aſide every ſin*, and to *deny* all *ungodlineſs*: yea and bleſſed be *the* God *and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, that we are allowed to exerciſe our ſelves unto godlineſs, and to imitate and reſemble the Image of Gods glorious Holineſs. Godlineſs is great gain, *if we accompt all*. A *new life* is a *new creation*, and a new creation is a *recreation*: The wit of Man can not contrive a ſort of life more deſirable then is this which *the Wiſdom of the onely Wiſe* God hath *chalked out* unto us: For, although the fleſh be indeed infirm, yet it *rejoyceth in hope*; and, as for the *Spirit*, that *is willing* and obedient. Verily new obedience is, not onely *profitable*, but *pleaſant*; if it be *a yoke*, it is an *eaſie* ones and the *bleſſing of the Lord* reſteth upon it: To ſeek *holineſs*, is, to exchange *curſes* for *bleſſedneſs*, *death* for *life*, *ſhame* for *glory*, *guilt* for *peace*, *darkneſs* for *light*, and *vexation* for *joy*. However, Why, ah why, ſhould Gods Commandements

mandments be grievous unto *him, who hath a love for his God?* As for the wicked, if *righteouſneſs* be an *abomination* unto him, it is becauſe *he knoweth no better:* Of it ſelf, (*Eſa.* 64. 5) it is all one to *work righteouſneſs*, and *to rejoyce:* A godly converſation is *Phil.* 3. 20 a *heavenly converſation!* No ſuch liberty, as (is) the Goſpel-liberty; and *if the Son* and Heir of all things *maketh* us *free*, then are we *free indeed* John 3. 36. (This is our third comfort.)

4. *Conſolation.* Our fourth comfort groweth in the place wherein this race is ſet before us, even in this preſent evil world: For, be it, that this world is a ſeducing world; be it, that it is a world of wickedneſs, yet, within this world, the Church of Jeſus Chriſt is *the pillar and ground of truth.* Be it, that this world is a wilderneſs, *in this wilderneſs* (*Hoſ.* 2. 14) God will *allure us:* Chriſt, as he is the way, ſo he ſetteth up way-marks; he, *Pſal.* 5. 8, will make his *way ſtraight before us.* Rather then we ſhould conform unto the evil of the world wherein we live, this Apoſtle (of us Gentiles) calleth upon us (*cap.* 11. 1) *Be ye followers of me!* yea Chriſt himſelf hath given us an example: Wherefore not a man among us, but may ſay with *David*, *Pſal.* 31. 8, *Thou haſt ſet my feet in a large place*, even, (*Eſa.* 18. 7) in *the place of the name of the Lord of hoſts.* Beloved, whereſoever the glory

glory of Chriſt his Goſpel ſhineth, there, *upon all* that *glory, is a defence.*

Secondly, Go out of the Church into the world; *Ieſus Chriſt* he *hath overcome the world for us.*

Thirdly, The more diſ-advantageous the ground, the greater praiſe unto him that runneth well: To be *holy in heaven* is no thanks to us; to be *righteous in Sodom*, to be *Saints in Nero's Court*, this is praiſe-worthy. It was 2 *Sam.* 15. 21 the commendation of *Ittai* that he would accompany his Prince *in a ſtrait*, he was reſolved to follow *David* as well in *death* as *in life.* To be then *on Gods ſide* when all the world *ſideth againſt God*, this is *Loyaltie.*

Fourthly, The *more wickedneſs* aboundeth in the world, the *more eaſily* may Gods children learn to *deteſt it*; to abſtain from *ſweet wines* is no eaſie matter, but even he who is *given to* his *appetite*, may ſoon be diſſwaded to deſiſt from *quaffing off* full draughts of *Vinegar*; doth *Naturally* beget in us a *deteſtation.* ugliness

Again, If the whole world lieth in wickedneſs, it is now *worthy our while* to watch againſt this enemie; this will be, not a *light skirmiſh*, but a *pitched Battail*; we have now ſome hopes of growing victorious; Faith will find *ſome pleaſure*, if it may encounter with a *world ſo dangerous* as is this wherein we live.

To conclude this: *The more wicked the world is*, the *more honour* have all thoſe Saints which keep themſelves unſpotted of it. *Phil.* 2. 15 We then behave our ſelves like the *ſons of* God, when in the *midſt of a crooked and perverſs generation* we abide *blameleſs and harmleſs*. Therefore, ſo farr is the world from *making againſt us*, that it *maketh for us*: This is then our fourth comfort.

5. Conſolation. Your Fifth Conſolation is, *That the time wherein we run is but ſhort.* Although the *ſpirit* be *willing*, (I wiſs) *fleſh* and *blood* is *weak*; and although the *commandement is good*, corrupt nature fancieth it *greivous*; allow this; never the leſs, *can we not watch* with Jeſus *one hour?* Chear up, *beleivers*, this world *ſhall not laſt alwaies: Eſa.* 57 *The righteous are taken away from* that which is *evil.* If compared to the everlaſtingneſs of the prize, *all that we* doe, or can *ſuffer, is but for a moment.* Yet a little while, and we ſhall *reſt from our labours*; yet a little while, and the race will be ended: *Know ye not*, that we are Οι ἐν σταδίῳ τρέχοντες; *Know ye not, that what race we run* (is but *ſtadium*) is, at moſt, *but a furlong* in length? *Sirs*, if the race (here ſet before us) be in length but *one furlong*, how eaſily may we hold out? This is therefore a Fifth Comfort.

Our

6. *Conſolation.*

Our next Conſolation ſpringeth from a ſenſe of *our natural inſufficiency*: And here a threefold Cord ſtrengtheneth us: For,

Firſt, God *accepteth the will for the deed*: *Rom.*8. 34 *Who is he that condemneth*? It is *Chriſt who died*, and died *for us*: As Chriſt *the head Eſa.* 50. 8 ſo every *member* of Chriſt may ſafely ſay *He is nere that juſtifieth me.*

Secondly, *Pſal.* 94. 18 *When I ſaid my foot ſlippeth thy mercies O Lord held me up. Prov.*2. 8 *The Lord preſerveth the way of his Saints*; He *Pſal.* 21. 3 *preventeth* thee *with* his *goodneſs*, He *Pſal.* 58. 13 ſets thee *in the way of his ſteps*: *Prov.* 3. 23 *Thy foot ſhall not ſtumble*, or, if it doth, He *Pſal.* 19. 11 *ſhall bear thee up*, He *Prov.* 3. 23 *will hold up thy ſteps in thy wayes*: nay, *Micah* 7. 8 *When I fall, I ſhall ariſe.*

Thirdly, *Not I, but grace*: So long as the *child* can *not goe* at all, the *nurſing-father carrieth him* in his boſome: Of our ſelves we *can doe nothing* to any purpoſe, therefore doth *Chriſt ſtrengthen* us to do all things that he expecteth from us: That God might teach Iſrael to goe, He (*Hoſ.* 11. 3.) *took* him *by the armes*: Jeſus Chriſt, he knoweth that we are altogether *unable* to fulfill his good pleaſure, wherefore he giveth us *a helping hand*; he *performeth our work for us*: Chriſt he knoweth that we are altogether *deficient*,

ficient, that we are altogether *unprofitable*; therefore he *putteth to his* own *ſtrength*, and reputeth *his* ſtrength *ours*: Jeſus Chriſt hath *ſtored up* grace, yea and the *ſpirit of grace* too, *againſt the times* of our *need*: Now that we are to run this race, he furniſhes us with ointment: The *wind*, which bloweth where it liſteth, *liſteth to ſit in our backs*, and to blow us forward: *Holy Angels* they are made our *miniſtring ſpirits*; and the *ſpirit of the Lord* he *leadeth*, he *draweth* us on! When the ſpirit of the Lord came upon *Elijah*, *Elijah* ran farr. What ſhall we more ſay? Never (never) had the *plain-dealing* Holy Ghoſt enjoyned them who obey the Goſpel, *ſo to run that they may obtain*; if, having *run their beſt*, obtain they may not.

7. Conſolation.

Another advantage ariſeth from the *Oppoſition made againſt us*; and this oppoſition is our double advantage: For,

Firſt, He that is begotten of God, foreknowing what an adverſary he hath, will the more ſtoutly reſiſt him: 1 *Ioh.* 5. 18 he that is begotten of God keepeth himſelf ſo pure, that that *wicked one toucheth him not*: *præ-monitus, præmunitus.*

Next, *Eſa.* 30. 10 *Say ye to the righteous it ſhall goe well with him: viz.* God will *with the temptation find a way for thine eſcape*; He *Pſal.* 91. 3 will *deliver thee from the ſnare of the fowler*; He *Prov.* 25. 15 will *pluck thy feet*

feet out of the nett; 2 *Cor.* 1. 10 *hath delivered, yea and will deliver*: Jeſus Chriſt was *heard in what he praied for*, then when *Ioh.* 17.15 he petitioned, *keep them from evill*. *Rom.* 8. 31 *If God be for us, who can be againſt us?* *Pſal.* 22. 11 If there be none to help, then will God be for us. Malicious *the wicked one is*, but *touch thee* he ſhall not; unleſs then when thou *trampleſt him under thy feet*. (This is a Seventh Refuge.) We are *ſtrong*, although not in our ſelves, *in the Lord*; *Our* power, is *His might*.

8. *Conſolation:*

The *Excellency of the prize*, that is (worthily) our next Comfort.

Firſt, It would *never anger one* to hazard his life for a *Diadem of beauty*: mean while, ſhould we never obtain, *we are but where we were*; Sons of death we were, and, ſhould we fail of our Crown, we ſhould ſtill be but ſons of death. *Quæ ſi non potuit, magnis tamen excidit auſis.*

Next, Let us ſtrive to obtain, and *ſuppoſe we* could *fail*, yet, ſince *what we could, we did*, we ſhall not be beaten with ſo many ſtripes, as negligent runners ſhall; I ſay, ſuppoſe we could not avoid, but die we muſt, yet we *ſhall not die ſo great a death*.

Thirdly, Were it ſo that our labour could be in vain in the Lord, yet let none of us *betray* our *truſt*: *ſerviamus licèt non liberati*; Let us continue *honeſt*, let us continue *loyal*, although we abide *neglected*. But

But, Fourthly, have a reſpect, as well unto the *aſſuredneſs*, as unto the *recompence* of the reward; our crown *is layed up*, and it is layed up *for us*; great *is* our reward in Heaven; rich *is* the prize of our high calling! The *lips of an Angel* would want words heavenly enough, and the *tongue of an arch-angel* would ſtammer, were it now attempting to ſet forth that *everlaſting joy*, that *eternal weight of glory*, which (when we have run, when we have *ſo run* as we ought) we ſhall all of us moſt aſſuredly poſſeſs. View the prize, and deſiſt from running who ſo can. This *tranſcendent* excellency of the prize may very well paſs for an eighth comfort.

9. *Conſolation.* But our laſt and greateſt Conſolation is, *The glory of our God.*

Firſt, Since the glory of our God is concerned, as well *in our running*, as *in our obtaining*, let none of Gods Elect doubt, but that, as *certainly* as they run, ſo *aſſuredly* they ſhall obtain. Know, it is out of *love*, out of *free love*, that Almighty God appointeth us, both *to obtain*, and *to run*: Nor need I tell you, that this *God of love* changeth not: Ye all acknowledge, that for whom the gracious and merciful Lord hath a Fatherly love, them (as a Father) *he loveth unto the end:* Accompt upon it, that the ſame God, which *for the glory of his free mercy* enjoyneth us to run, will, *for the glory of his free goodneſs*, enable

enable us to obtain. *Fear not little flock, it is your Fathers good pleasure to give you a kingdom:* For this very cause he doth *single you out* to run this race, that he may hereafter *glorifie himself in exalting you* unto an exceeding and eternal weight of glory. How *infinitely infinite* is the *unsearchable* glory of that *great* God, who, unto every one that obtaineth, can bestow so rich a prize; and can make, *whomsoever he pleaseth,* so to run that he shall be sure to obtain?

Next, As God therefore causeth us to obtain the prize, that he may take delight (*by glorifying himself*) in advancing us; so his *glory will* he *not give to another.* From what time the old Serpent *fooled* and *foiled Adam,* that Serpent hath not ceased to *blaspheme* and *revile* our God; as if *make us he could,* but *preserve us he could not:* But let the *malice,* and the *subtilty,* and the *power,* of Satan speak and do, their worst; *whomsoever the Lord reserveth* to himself, *preserve them he can,* exalt them he will: when *Satan* hath layed all the *snares* which his *revengeful malice* can invent, the elect of God *shall run,* and (running) shall *obtain.* True, should not the *chosen of the Lord* obtain the prize for which they run, the Devil would then vaunt it indeed; but, assure your selves, *God standeth more upon his honor then so.* Esa. 43. 21 *This people have I formed for my self, they shall*

shew

ſhew forth my praiſe: Of every one which runneth his beſt, God ſaith, *For mine own ſake, even for mine own ſake, I will do it; I have brought him, and he ſhall make his way proſperous*, Eſa. 48. 11. Look back upon *the glory of God* in that Text; It is *not I* the omnipotent God will, *but he* (he *whom I have brought*) ſhall, make his way proſperous. A *Giant* can make a *childe* overcome a *ſtrong man*.

The Concluſion.

Hear me (ye that deſpair of this heavenly prize) In our obtaining, our *God is intereſted as deeply as are we*: He is not onely of *our ſide*, but *of our party*: Are ye reſolved to win the prize, if ye can? Know, it is *Gods determination* that ye *ſhall* win it, if you *will*: That Jeſus Chriſt *made the lame to walk*, it was the glory of God the Father; it is likewiſe the glory of God the Father, that Jeſus Chriſt enableth *lame believers, ſo to run* that they may obtain.

Mat. 15. 31. *Mark.* 7. 37. *Jer.* 33. 9.

Revel. 4. 11 Saints and Angels cry *Thou art worthy O Lord to receive glory, honour, and power, for thou haſt created all things, and for thy pleaſure* they are, and were, *created*; they *were* created *at firſt*, and *are ſtill* created, that is, *preſerved*. *Friends*, if the *houſ-keeper* will not give way that any *idle-huſie-bodies* ſhall by any meanes *diſappoint* him of his *full retinue*, and of his *full number of ſervants* and *attendants*; then of all thoſe whom the great

great God hath choſen to fill up the number of his *heavenly Quire*; he will looſe none: (None) *maugre* all that ſin or Satan, *ſhall*, or *can* doe. 1 *Pet.* 1. 5.

Only take ye heed, that ye excludd not your ſelves from being *Kingly Prieſts* unto our God: The *Devil*, he ſeeketh our *perdition*; but, as for *Jeſus Chriſt*, the ſame minde is ever in him towards us, which was once in St. *Paul* toward the *Philipians*; we are his *dearly beloved*, his *longed for*, his *joy*, and his *crown*: He died for us, he layeth up for us an *eternal weight* of glory; Oh, let him *ſee of the travail of his ſoul*: It is our *Maſters joy*, as well as *ours*, if we *ſo run* that we *doe obtain*. To him it is, to him it will be, *a praiſe, a delight, a rejoycing*, if we day by day *ſo run* through every preſent duty, as *in ſincerity* we ought. *Revel.* 1. 6. *Phil.* 4. 1. *Joh.* 17. 10, 23. *Matt.* 25, 21. *Joh.* 14. 21. *Epheſ.* 1. 6, 12. 1 *Pet.* 1. 7.

Let them ceaſe form running, who *forſake their own mercy*; but let us (who have an *eye to the recompence of reward*), let us (*through ſanctification of the ſpirit to obedience*) ſo run on unto perfection, that we may obtain *everlaſting joy* to our ſelves; and (what is more deſireable) *everlaſting glory* to our Lord God. *Heb.* 11. 26. 1 *Pet.* 1. 2. 2 *Theſ.* 2. 13, 14.

To him, *even*, to God the Holy Spirit, which worketh in us *to will and to doe*; unto God the Son, who *hath given us of his Spirit*; unto God the Father, who *hath given us his* *Phil.* 2. 13. 1 *Joh.* 3. 24.

Esa. 6. 9.
2 *Pet.* 1. 3.
Rom. 8. 32.

Son, and (with his Son) *all things pertaining to life, and godliness*; be, the perfection of *the Race set before us*, the dayly comfort of dayly *well running*, and *the prize which we* shall everlastingly *obtain*, with *due humility*, and with *unfained thankfulness*, for ever and ever ascribed; *Amen*, and *Amen*.

FINIS.